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May 21, 1910.

The "Spectator" and the King

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OBSEQUIES

You have wailed and put dust on your heads and
shouted your griefs from the housetops,
You have carried with pomp through the black lines
of women a king to his charnel,
Black are your breasts with the beating of them, and
hurt are your eyes with weeping.
You have buried your good, and set up your woe for a
virtue,
And now it is you return each man to his labour and
business,
Each man to go his ways, O decorous orderly people;
Yet are there other virtues for England to wear, and
when you pray, if you do pray,
Pray, that though they be rags and defiled, you tear
them not from her.

LIFE AND LETTERS

A CORRESPONDENT sends us an old rhyme to which he has attached what he calls "a new addendum":—

George the First was always reckoned
Vile; but viler George the Second;
And what mortal ever heard
Any good of George the Third?
When from earth the Fourth descended,
Lord be praised! the Georges ended.
But now a George the Fifth we've got
Who'll compensate us for the lot.

For our own part we concur; though we think our correspondent's "addendum" might be improved upon.

The *Literary Post* continues in its froward courses. The issue for May 18 can leave no doubt as to the desires of our contemporary. Certain matters, which Mr. Nash and his advisers have apparently imagined would cloud and cover up the issue, are to be dealt with in another place. But the issue remains, and we are glad to note that Lady Margaret Sackville has been induced to say a word for herself in respect of her article as to the poet Macfie. We print Lady Margaret Sackville's letter below:

"A POET OF THE FUTURE."

To the Editor of the "*Literary Post*."

SIR,—Why is THE ACADEMY so cross? I hold that Mr. Macfie writes good poetry; they deny it. This surely is a point which one should be able to discuss without forgetting one's manners. Besides, I am afraid I cannot claim to have "discovered" Mr. Macfie. That was done some years ago, on the publication of his first book, by Andrew Lang, Professor Saintsbury, William Sharp, John Davidson, and other quite passable critics. May I quote John Davidson's opinion? "Had Mr. Macfie called his book 'Diamond Dust' it would not unfitly have described much that is splendid in it. . . . Mr. Macfie has written one song—'Love Me'—which may rank with any but the few unapproachable in this kind; and another, 'King Death,' of a unique order, which for some time to come the world will not willingly let die. And all this in a first book."

THE ACADEMY may be right, but in the meanwhile there is at least something to be said on the other side.—Yours faithfully,
Edinburgh. MARGARET SACKVILLE.

We quite agree with Lady Margaret Sackville that "one's manners" should not be forgotten, and we have not forgotten them. Fortunately for the *Literary Post*, however, the argument is not about manners, but about Macfie. If Lady Margaret Sackville had been content at the outset to say what she now says—namely, that "Mr. Macfie writes good poetry"—she would have saved the *Literary Post* some trouble. Her present statement of the case is fairly reasonable. We should not ourselves say that Mr. Macfie writes good poetry, and we should not admit that the lines Lady Margaret Sackville has already quoted to us from Macfie were good poetry. At the same time, the statement might have been allowed to pass as a general statement. But when Lady Margaret Sackville first dragged Mr. Macfie before us in the *Literary Post* she described his work in quite different and much more eulogistic terms. Furthermore, she topped up her article with the headline "A Poet of the Future." It may be, of course, that headlines are of no importance to Lady Margaret Sackville or to the editor of the *Literary Post*. They may reckon them as mere details of journalism without weight and without significance. In our opinion, however, they should not be misleading, and we are in a position to assert, apart from the sample that Lady Margaret Sackville offered us, that Macfie is most certainly not the kind of poet who would be described as "a poet of the future" by a responsible literary journal. According to Lady Margaret Sackville's own showing, in fact, he is rather a poet of the past—that is to say, if we are definitely to call him poet at all. It will be observed that Lady Margaret proceeds to back up her own opinion with the opinions of the late Mr. Sharp and the late Mr. Davidson, and also with the opinions of Mr. Lang and Professor Saintsbury.

We are not favoured with the words used by Messrs. Lang, Saintsbury, and Sharp, but John Davidson's encomium is put down flat before us. "Had Mr. Macfie called his book 'Diamond Dust' it would not unfitly have described much that is splendid in it. . . . Mr. Macfie has written one song, 'Love Me,' which may rank with any but the few unapproachable in this kind; and another, 'King Death,' of a unique order, which for some time to

come the world will not willingly let die. And all this in a first book." Well, we have been at the pains to examine Macfie's first book; and particularly have we examined the two pieces which John Davidson praised, and which for reasons best known to herself Lady Margaret Sackville omitted to quote. "Love Me"—the song, mark you, which may rank with any but the few unapproachable in this kind—begins as follows:—

How long did the sun's round passionate mouth
Kiss that rose's lips I wonder?
How long did the amorous wind from the South
Try to press the petals asunder?

There are two or three other stanzas of no better quality, and the song ends:—

Love me! I loved thee long ago.
Love me! The land is sunny.
Love me! Look how the roses blow,
And the bees are gathering honey.

If we had been concerned to produce from the works of Macfie a piece of utter banality and foolishness, this stanza would surely have served our turn with a vengeance. Yet Davidson, either by an aberration of the critical instinct or because Macfie comes out of Scotland, went out of his way to laud a song containing such lines as capable of ranking "with any but the few unapproachable in this kind." And Lady Margaret Sackville rakes up Davidson's bit of log-rolling and throws it at us for serious and authoritative criticism. We have not yet taken leave of our senses, and we are not to be fooled and put off with this kind of argument. As for "King Death," described by Davidson as "a poem of a unique order which for some time to come the world will not willingly let die," it may be a trifle better than "Love Me," because there is an idea in it. But the execution is execrable and almost illiterate, as witness the first verse:—

Ha! ha! None dare marry me,
Chuckled the king called Death,
As, rattling his royal ribs together,
He danced himself out of breath.

Think of that "As, rattling his royal ribs together, he danced himself out of breath," and tell us upon what grounds of critical reason or sanity Davidson or Lady Margaret Sackville should apply Milton's words to such ill-considered writing.

We have gone carefully through Macfie's volumes, and we have no hesitation in saying that, apart from three or four pieces, which neither Lady Margaret Sackville nor her backing of "critics" would appear to have named, there is not a poem among them which deserves to be remembered, or which is in the least degree better or more worthy than the average output of the average poetaster of the hour. When Lady Margaret Sackville quotes Davidson at us she must either believe that because Davidson praises what is bad it must necessarily be good, or she must believe that "Love Me" and "King Death" are fine pieces of writing. In either case she is palpably wrong, and there can be no getting away from it. The whole business shows in a fine light the appalling methods of "criticism" which nowadays prevail. Here is the ex-President of the Poetry Recital Society writing at the length of nearly two columns in a paper called the *Literary Post* about a poet whom she calls "a poet of the future." The poet in question would appear to be a doctor by profession, and save and except two slight volumes of minor verse, his contributions to literature consist of a booklet called "Air and Health" and another booklet called "Science, Matter, and Immortality." He is also, if you please, joint-author, with no less a personage than Lady Margaret Sackville herself, of a collection of "Fairy Tales for Old and Young." His first volume of verse was published in 1892, and his second in 1904; so that in eighteen years this poet of the future has given us two little sheaves of indifferent matter, and for six

years past has not published a line. And because we reprove Lady Margaret Sackville and the *Literary Post* for trotting him out clothed on with ribbands and medals and bent with the laurel and the bays, the *Literary Post* is to turn round and abuse us as though we were pick-pockets. Lady Margaret Sackville has the grace to admit that we "may be right." Unless she is a very dull person indeed, she knows that we are right, and as she is so fond of manners, she might have been mannerly enough to acknowledge that she had allowed her kind dispositions towards Mr. Macfie to run away with her; instead of which she lets herself off with "mays."

We are sick of this whole business of foisting off mediocre geese for swans. Kindness to one's fellow-labourers in the vineyard, and to one's own countrymen, and to one's collaborators in fairy tales is all very sweet and noble; but when it deceives the public, or attempts to deceive the public, it becomes a critical sin of the gravest kind. We have never had too great an opinion of John Davidson; but if we had not inquired closely into his criticism of Macfie, we should never have believed that he was capable of such a want of critical good faith as is thereby indicated. Davidson's name, appended to the comment Lady Margaret Sackville quotes, and the names of William Sharp and of Mr. Lang and Professor Saintsbury, will no doubt convince the easy-going readers of the *Literary Post* that Macfie must be a poet of more than an ordinary calibre. We have quoted the sparkling gems which Davidson professed to admire, and nailed them down for what they are. And we shall be pleased to perform a like service for any pieces which Mr. Lang or Professor Saintsbury may choose to eulogise in similar terms. Facts are facts even where poetry is concerned, and the sooner the *Literary Post* becomes aware of it the better will it shine. When our contemporary requires further lessons in either poetry or manners we shall be glad to oblige it.

In view of the attitude which has been taken up by the editor of the *Literary Post*, we wish to point out that our quotations from Macfie are abbreviated out of considerations of copyright, and not because we desire to garble or misrepresent anything that Macfie has written. Possibly these same considerations have prevented the *Literary Post* from printing on our invitation such examples of the major writing of Macfie as would prove him to be "a poet of the future." In any case, not a line of Macfie has appeared in the *Literary Post* since Lady Margaret Sackville produced her one and only extract, which, by the way, is taken holus-bolus from the first page of Macfie's "New Poems." It is interesting to note further that, for the first time in its life, Mr. Nash's organ ventures this week on a piece of serious poetry in the shape of an irregular sonnet. We print the octave:—

No victor's obsequies are thine, O King!
No panoply of conquest decks thy name;
No martial deeds were thine, that poets sing;
Not thine the pride of battle nor the blame.
No war-lord thou the gage of death to fling,
No carnage fouled the earth to niche thy fame:
Ne'er from the vanquished didst thou tribute wring,
Nor from the fawning nations homage claim.

We suppose that from the *Literary Post's* point of view it is *contra bonos mores*; but we shall say that the No's would appear to have it here; whereas in the sestet, in which King Edward is described as "Father of his People," the Ne'er's get it. Really, really, Mr. Nash's journal will have to travel a great way before it reaches concert pitch in the matter of poetry.

In last week's issue of THE ACADEMY we printed a letter from Mr. Joseph Banister, which contained the following paragraph:—

Cohen Siemann, Walter Emanuel, Rudolph Lehmann, and the Jewmourists on the staff of *Punch*, are said to deny that their humour is of the porky kind.

Objection has been taken to the suggestion that Mr. Owen Seaman is one of the children of Israel. We have inquired of Mr. Banister as to the grounds for this suggestion, and with his reply he forwards us a letter from Mr. G. K. Chesterton, in which that gentleman roundly asserts that the present editor of *Punch* is a Jew, and may thus claim to be of the company of Solomon, Heine, Disraeli, Lord Burnham, and Mr. Joel. It seems to us likely, however, that Mr. Seaman's father spelt his name Sea-man, and christened Mr. Seaman, Owen; so that when Mr. Banister refers to him as Cohen Siemann he may be stretching a point after the manner of the humourist. But *Punch* has always been pretty handy at the more or less humorous transformation of people's names, and we do not suppose that Mr. Seaman will grumble because his own turn happens to have come round.

We hear that a certain popular novelist is about to launch a publishing business with the view of publishing only his own novels. Of course, the author as publisher is not exactly a new thing. Authors have a knack of allowing themselves to be dragged into publishing concerns, and they do not usually come out with full hands. But a novelist who will publish his own works, and his own works only, rather fires the imagination. If everybody had their due the author would always be his own publisher—at any rate, in the sense that he would employ a publisher instead of being employed by the publisher, as is practically the case at present. We believe that with very small capital and with comparatively little trouble any author of acceptance could publish his own works and make them yield a good deal greater income than he can hope to get out of them by favour of the professional publisher. The principal difficulty under present conditions would be with the booksellers. Only a few authors could afford to employ a traveller to subscribe his productions in London and in the provinces. The publisher's traveller is nowadays a most important personage. The sales and reputations of eminence lie in the hollow of his hand, so to speak. He is supposed to be able to "push" an author or "drop him out" at his own sweet will, and he is supposed to be able to force sales. Such is the confidence reposed in him that certain publishing houses expect him to perform the duties of a "reader." That is to say that before accepting a novel they will ask him to read it in manuscript and give his opinion as to its ultimate saleability. We are of opinion that this is a woeful practice, and bad for letters. The author's only way out is to publish for himself and trust to the public demand. We shall watch the new experiment with a good deal of interest, though we suppose that, like the rest of the innovations, it is really doomed to failure from the start.

A writer in the *Book Monthly* has been consulting the index of the "Encyclopædia Britannica," and on page 54 he finds the following entry:—

Art
Art Squares,
Art Teaching
"Art thou weary."

Which reminds us of the provincial librarian's catalogue in which you might read:

Mill on Logic
Ditto on the Floss

The whole business of indexing bristles with difficulties, and we are not sure that, quaint as the foregoing examples may appear, there is anything about them which is to be deprecated. For the uninformed—and we suppose it is the uninformed who chiefly consult encyclopædias—art is art and Mill is Mill, and it is handy that they are to be found in what the uninformed would consider their right places.

BALLAD

It is the white Princess
Who looks towards the sea,
From her fair tower that spires the sky
A shaft of ivory,
While her two hands like nested doves
Are pale upon her knee.

It is the white Princess
Who left the courtiers gay,
And built her bower upon the shore
Amid the wind and spray,
Where she might watch the death of night
And see the birth of day.

It is the white Princess
Who does not look below
To where twelve suitors for her hand
Are marching to and fro,
Who came to tell her words of love
Five weary years ago.

It is the white Princess
Who heeds not, though they wait,
And send twelve heralds thrice a day
With trumpets to her gate;
Her eyes are ever to the sea,
As to the Book of Fate.

It is the white Princess
Who never lays her down
To sleep when purple shadows hang
Like violets o'er the town;
And her gold hair has closely hid
The fashion of her gown.

It is the white Princess
Who does not turn her head,
Or care that spring is on the hill,
Or that the rose is red;
While up above the lark sings loud,
Not knowing she is dead.

THE "SPECTATOR" AND THE KING

DULNESS was ever in league against decency. It will astonish nobody that the *Spectator* has rushed upon us with columns of advice for His Majesty King George V. In last week's issue there is an article addressed practically to the King himself, and entitled "King George V.," and a supplementary or side show article entitled "Kingliness." With the help of these lamps to his feet his Majesty would doubtless be able to shape a course which

might conceivably meet with the high blessing and approval of the editor of the *Spectator* in his cocked hat, not to mention Mr. St. Loe Strachey the plain, unvarnished, pot-hatted citizen. We have not the space to quote the *Spectator* at over-flattering length; but from our contemporary's first leader we take the following extraordinary words:—

Again, men in whom the ruling passion is sincerity joined to simplicity are liable to certain positive as well as negative disadvantages. Such characters are specially prone to prejudice. It has been said that prejudices are the salt of life, and that a man who is without them is hardly human. There may be no doubt a scintilla of truth in that saying; but for Kings prejudice remains the most dangerous of defects. Prejudice is near akin to suspicion, and, as Bacon tells us, suspicion clouds the mind. But a King above all men must keep his mind unclouded. His subjects may be allowed to nurse their prejudices. He cannot afford to indulge them even for an hour. He must erase from the mirror of his mind every scratch that has been made thereon by accident, or even by deliberate illwill. He dare not allow any public purpose to be deflected by a personal instinct of dislike. There must be no "Dr. Fells"—whether men, nations, causes, or institutions—in the records of his brain. Even if by nature he shuns so Olympian an attitude and regards it as inhuman, he must be content to remember that such inhumanity is part of kingship. George III. well-nigh ruined his country by his prejudices, both positive and negative. Had he been able to subdue them, how different would be the history of his reign, and how different the verdict of posterity upon him as a King. No doubt if we examine those prejudices impartially much may be said in the abstract in defence of them. For example, it is difficult to subdue a sense of sympathy with George III. for his prejudice against Fox, for Fox's character, public and private, was enough to make any decent man detest him. He was factious, dissolute, selfish, untrustworthy, a gambler, a voluptuary, a cynical sentimentalist, and a politician without principle or even scruple. Yet the verdict of history has gone against, and rightly gone against, the King for indulging his personal prejudices in the case of Fox. Take again the King's positive prejudice in favour of Addington. If one could think of George III. merely as a private individual, one might respect him for liking, in a corrupt age, an honest, stupid, mediocre man; but who can doubt that his prejudice in favour of Addington did great harm to the nation?

The *Spectator* goes on to inform us that "Kings must not only be able to pardon and to forgive; they must be able to forget. . . . They must have no enemies in the true sense. . . . Life demands an art. The failure to realise this has often brought shipwreck for ordinary men and women. . . . Every king must be in a certain sense an actor, though his acting need involve no insincerity." On the face of it, this is pretty talk from a ponderous and

responsible review. It is the cant, perhaps, of the age, and a fair-seeming cant; but it is none the less cant, and it is none the less precisely the special brand of cant which has been playing havoc in the affairs of state and with the temper and mind of the British people during the past few decades. For King George, by the direction of the *Spectator*, there are to be no "Dr. Fells." In view of the fact that the mob Government of the day are "Dr. Fells" almost to a man, how in the name of goodness is his Majesty to escape them? Then King George V., as directed and inspired by the *Spectator*, must crush under his heel the Royal prejudices; and he must do this, forsooth, because George III. did not like Fox, and was more or less addicted to Addington. Mr. St. Loe Strachey forgets his history. It has altogether escaped his knowledge, apparently, that for sixty years there reigned in England her late Majesty Queen Victoria, who, to her extreme and everlasting credit be it said, was as full of prejudices as an egg is full of meat, and who, despite this horrible failing, managed to keep the ship of state on an even keel and her own throne right side up without in the least "forgetting," or playing the actress. Queen Victoria's prejudices were the finest things that ever happened for Queen Victoria's people. They were prejudices which left no room for chicanery, humbug, or dishonour, and they were prejudices which kept the name and Court and government and spirit of England clean and sweet and sound, and kept in check and on the curb the vile and ignoble forces, political, commercial and social, which would appear now rapidly to be overwhelming us. It is kings and queens who, let the *Spectator* babble as it may about the will of the people, set the fashion and the example for the lives of their subjects. If you have a court in which virtue and goodness are honoured you will have a people among whom virtue and goodness are esteemed. Smartness, cleverness, pushfulness, and sheer wealth had to know and keep their places in Queen Victoria's day. There would have been no Harmsworths and no Levi Lawsons in the peerage under the Victorian régime. There would have been no John Burns, Cabinet Minister; no Lloyd George, Chancellor of the Exchequer; no Winston Churchill, of the sort we have got; and no Asquith, Prime Minister of England. Prejudice keeps us from the Evil One. The want of prejudice says "Let him in; he may be useful." We know nothing as yet of the prejudices of His Majesty King George V., excepting that up to now he has displayed a prejudice for leading the kind of life for which the shallow and the brainless and the vulgar have no particular admiration. We know of him that he is a sailor inured to discipline and bred to honesty, and the *Spectator* may take it from us that such a man and such a monarch has the whole art of life and the whole art of ruling in his hands. There can be no service worth calling service that is based in corruption, and there can be no kingliness, which is worth calling kingliness, in acquiescence, finesse, part-acting or figure-headism. King Edward VII. permitted himself, or would appear to have permitted himself, to take that view of his office which the *Spectator*, in common with the *Daily Mirror* and the Radical Press,

would now wish to force upon King George. King Edward VII. did not lack intelligence; he was a competent king and he knew what he was doing; but he was the victim of extraordinary circumstances. The rule of Queen Victoria had been a wise but firm and prejudiced rule. The country prospered under it, and the country at large loved it. But the baser forces hated it and chafed against it, and with enlightenment, advancement, broad-mindedness, and the unprejudiced mind for their shibboleths they went to work to set up in the country and in the Government and in the Court a condition of affairs which has proved in the event to be big with dangers and perils of the gravest kind. King Edward VII., as the *Spectator* admits, cast aside prejudice and did his best to rule by tact and tolerance, with results which are known and marked of all men—results which have imperilled the Constitution of England, imperilled her paramountcy and empire, and left her at the mercy of the Harmsworths at home and the German Emperor abroad. The *Spectator* assures us that the mob Government will not now proceed with its policy in regard to the Constitution, because it would be "unfair" to place King George at the beginning of his reign in the most difficult position in which an English monarch has ever found himself. For our own part we shall be quite satisfied if the mob Government will not proceed with its policy, and so doubtless will King George. At the same time, we shall have to thank the mob Government for nothing. Some of the most vital difficulties of the situation are already created and already in active operation, and we are believing that King George will face them and triumph over them. But of one thing the mob Government and the *Spectator* may rest assured, and that is, that King George V. would just as soon, and probably a good deal sooner, face his difficulties now as face them later on, and that whether the Government is in favour of delay or not in favour of delay, the big difficulty of all will be dealt with by the King on the lines which are imperatively dictated by his position as a constitutional sovereign. The King has no business to loosen his grip on the sceptre at the behest of smug persons who tell us that wrong and dishonour must exist in order that we may advance. Says the *Spectator*, with a fine show of wisdom, "If one thinks what the ideal chairman of a meeting of ordinary Englishmen has to be, one has a very fair picture of the virtues needed in the British King"—which is Bottomley and his business government over again. The "ideal chairman" of a meeting of Englishmen, like the ideal after-dinner speaker, is usually and commonly an ass—a bleater-out of nothings about nothing. And this is what the pundits and the prowlers expect from a King of England! We shall be astonished if they get it from his Majesty King George V., even with the *Spectator* to help them.

ON TRANSLATING MEREDITH

I TRIED and did it even against the advice of the old master himself. He was looking forward with alarm, so he put it, to the trouble I was proposing to give myself

in translation. I must confess that the trouble was very considerable indeed, but I hasten to add that it was the most delightful and stimulating sort of trouble an ambitious person could take upon himself. It seems to me that in endeavouring to turn into German that mighty trifle the *Essay on Comedy*, I have been going through a complete course of mental and literary training. I think I may say that if now, after three years' wrestling with the difficulties and the beauties of that little book, I seem to feel and know the real thing when I see it, I owe it to the happy idea which prompted me to tackle George Meredith's lecture on comedy, "On the Idea of Comedy and the Uses of the Comic Spirit." Will it interest English readers to hear of my experiences and the adventures encountered in the course of my labours? I had to do the whole thing four times over from beginning to end; there are pages which I wrote as many as six or seven times. This gave me quite unusual opportunities of meditating on the language and style of our author. I have done so as a staunch admirer throughout. Yet I could not help being fully alive to those features which have scared away so many and brought down such violent anathemas. I do think I might have a few just remarks to make on the subject. To begin with, it needs to be pointed out that the style of the *Essay on Comedy* differs very considerably from that used in the novels. Far from being simpler or clearer, as some critics have said, it is rather more irregular and less grammatical; it is irregular and ungrammatical almost to carelessness. Sentences such as some of those reproduced below are not to be found in the novels, not even in "One of our Conquerors," which bears the crown for toughness. As far as translation goes, the essay is certainly much more difficult than the prose of the narrative works. I attribute this to the fact that the essay was originally conceived and composed as a lecture and never properly arranged for print. It shows its primary destination in every line, and thereby proves what an exquisite sense the author had for those niceties of form and expression which distinguish one literary kind from another. But his printing the lecture without subjecting it to some little process of adaptation proves with equal force how utterly regardless he could be of the fair claims and dues of his readers. What, with the light of the speaker's eyes flashing through and through it, may have been as luminous as daylight; what, with the ring of that eloquent voice bringing out the whole rich meaning, must have gone straight to the hearer's understanding, is apt to appear rather deficient to the man who has to get it all from the cold stiff print of a stubborn little volume in red covers. It is a mistake to speak of the "admirable clearness of the prose of the *Essay on Comedy*," as does Mr. G. M. Trevelyan in his helpful book on Meredith.

Two difficulties, almost equally harassing, the translator of the essay has to battle with. Suppose him to be capable of feeling the inimitable grace and force and simplicity of one-half of a passage. He will strive with all his might, and yet hopelessly almost from the outset, to find something approaching it in his own idiom; he would be as graceful, as forceful, as simple, and withal as poetical. But how is he to succeed when the second half of the passage presents to him the face of a sphinx? When he is reduced to determine by a toss-up which might be the likeliest of a number of possible antecedents to some *it* or *its*. There is at least one instance of an *its* without any antecedent whatever (p. 92):

"We have had comic pulpits, for a sign that the

laughter-moving and the worshipful may be in alliance; I know not how far comic, or how much assisted in seeming so by the unexpectedness and the relief of its appearance; at least they are popular, they are said to win the ear."

Of whose appearance? Obviously the adjective comic in "comic pulpits" and "how far comic" has unawares assumed the dignity of a noun substantive, and *its* stands as its worthy representative, so that what is here meant is, that the comic pulpits might possibly not be really comic but only seem so by the appearance of the comic in them. Which, I admit, does not sound over-clear. Pitiful is the plight of the translator who has to fight such dragon growths—live monsters without heads!

My next quotation is somewhat ampler (pp. 88-9):

"If you believe that our civilisation is founded in common sense (and it is the first condition of sanity to believe it) you will, when contemplating men, discern a Spirit overhead; not more heavenly than the light flashed upward from glassy surfaces, but luminous and watchful; never shooting beyond them, nor lagging in the rear; so closely attached to them that it may be taken for a slavish reflex, until its features are studied. It has the sage's brow, and the sunny malice of a fawn lurks at the corners of the half-closed lips drawn in an idle wariness of half-tension. That slim feasting smile, shaped like the long-bow, was once a big round satyr's laugh, that flung up the brows like a fortress lifted by gunpowder. The laugh will come again, but it will be of the order of the smile finely tempered, showing sunlight of the mind, mental richness rather than noisy enormity. *Its* (!) common aspect is one of unsolicitous observation, as if surveying a full field and having leisure to dart on its chosen morsels, without any fluttering eagerness. Men's future upon earth does not attract *it* . . ."

Nobody will deny that a passage more poetical of conception or more lovely of expression would be extremely hard to find in English prose; and it goes on even more beautiful for another page. Could anything be simpler, more unaffected? And yet, how often must you read it before you can tell what the *its* refers to? You think that it must be the "laugh" and the "it," or the "smile" of the preceding clause, but you will see that cannot well be, when you come to the next sentence. Yet it is almost impossible to believe that it simply continues, with a tremendous leap across two or three intervening propositions, the chain of pronouns ten lines above. I am not yet out of the puzzle myself, although I have tried my hardest. I rather incline to take it to stand not for "laugh," but for "the Spirit overhead," high up at the beginning of my quotation. However, there can be little doubt that laugh has some share in it too. For one short moment the writer saw the Spirit reduced to a mere smile hanging somewhere in the sky; long enough, though, to throw us off the track and puzzle us when we find ourselves confronted with the Spirit in its full shape again. The process rather suggests the transformations of the famous Cheshire Cat in "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland." What can the wretched translator do in such cases? The inevitable result of his labours will be that his perhaps intelligible version will appear as complicated and muddled as the unintelligible original looks simple and clear. Obviously that is not fair, though not to be helped.

I do not suppose that readers generally, even the careful ones, would notice anything incorrect in the two examples quoted as well as in many similar instances. The impression received from the passage as a whole carries them safely past the shallows, and so, again, it may not be fair in the translator—who, after all, is only a meddler—to reveal them. But his guileless intention is only to show what troubles he has gone through, not by any means the treacherous one of furnishing new material to the detractors of Meredith. He is encouraged to proceed (p. 72):—

"Whether right or wrong in his politics and his criticisms [the person alluded to is Aristophanes], and bearing in mind (that is if *we* bear in mind) the instruments he played on and the audience he had to win, there is an idea in his comedies: it is the Idea of Good Citizenship."

This certainly is about as bad as a bad sentence could be. It reads like a text corrupted by a careless scribe copying from an already inexact shorthand copy. Yet from the translator's point of view a construction like this may come almost as a relief; if the grammar is faulty, the meaning at least is clear. But how about this, which I cull from the very same page?—

"Aristophanes was 'profane' under satiric direction, unlike his rivals Cratinus . . . and others, if we are to believe him, who, in their extraordinary Donnybrook Fair of the Day of Comedy, thumped one another and everybody else with absolute heartiness, as he did, but aimed at small game, and dragged forth particular women, which he did not."

Fold on snaky fold, the sentence runs and wriggles on into the dimensions of a regular python, a python with a fearful swelling in its middle, as if it had swallowed a whole giraffe and half a rhinoceros—"in their extraordinary Donnybrook Fair of the Day of Comedy." This knot I was wise enough to drop out of my translation; the python I severed at a convenient joint, and I think that, on the whole, my version is the better for it. But I am not satisfied. I shall go on worrying until I have got a plausible explanation of what the "Donnybrook Fair of the Day of Comedy" might be. The "Encyclopædia Britannica" informs us that Donnybrook is a village in the neighbourhood of Dublin, and famous for its *riotous fair*. I take the thumping practised on each other by the Athenian comic dramatists to correspond to the riotousness of the fair. The Day of Comedy, like the "Day of the Daughter of Hades" (one of the finest of Meredith's poems), or like the proverbial dog that will have his day, may seem to mean the time when Comedy was lusty and flourishing. So far so good. The whole conceit, then, would amount to this, that the rivals of Aristophanes turned the Day of Comedy into a riotous fair by the coarse horse-play which they indulged in.

My argument wriggles, too. Yet there is no denying the fact that our questionable phrase sounds extremely jolly and suggestive. Its general drift may be caught at first sight by one versed in the originator's idiosyncrasies. The difficulty begins when an accurate analysis has to be attempted; it towers mountains high in the path of the translator. He, poor wight, is allowed no idiosyncrasies; he must not suppose his readers to be initiated and up to slightest hints. He is bound to be explicit when his author revels in allusions. Whether or no the passage under discussion will bear the interpretation here set forth, it is

an instance of Meredith's fondness for allusion. It is needless to say that he uses this accomplished and scholarly trick neatly enough; the scholarly reader may derive high enjoyment from it. But consider the translator's plight. If he is bent on giving his readers all that an accomplished scholar can get out of the original, he is compelled to encumber his text with footnotes and incur the reproach that he is too thorough and lagging. It looks like rank pedantry to quote the name of Shakespeare when he tries to give the full meaning of "dyer's hands" (p. 8), of bodies which "if you prick them do not bleed" (p. 9), of greedy worthies "with fat capon lined." But he has made up his mind, and if explain he must, a word, in these cases, will do. Not so in instances like the following (p. 12):—

"Our tenacity of national impressions has caused the word theatre since then to prod the Puritan nervous system like a satanic instrument, just as one has known *Anti-Papists*, for whom *Smithfield* was redolent of a sinister smoke, as though they had a later recollection of the place than the lowing herds."

These few lines contain so much that cries for an elucidation, when it is to be served up to a non-English audience, that the translator's footnote will demand a page or more. Luckily they are of no importance for a better understanding of the matter, so that they may be suppressed. It is being kind to the original, it seems to me, to hide and tuck away its ugly corners. Still, a scrupulous translator does not like to take liberties.

One characteristic of Meredith's style, specially devised, as it would seem, to confound this conscientious person, I mean his fault of excessive condensation, is even more strikingly present in the *Essay on Comedy* than in his other books. Very often the desire to be brief has caused the writer to be obscure, as in this sentence (p. 82):

"Byron had splendid powers of humour, and the most poetic satire we have example of, fusing at times to hard irony."

What fuses? The satire alone, or the satire and the powers of humour? Two pages farther on we are shown the correct use of the verb, where it says "fusing the Tragic sentiment with the Comic narrative." It is this same striving after conciseness, too, that is to be made responsible for a strange baldness in many passages. It looks as if the lecturer on Comedy had been too hurried to put in those humble, but helpful, parts of speech that we call conjunctions and adverbs. The result of these omissions, to be sure, is not infrequently a surprising, an unparalleled terseness of phrase; but now and then it is nothing so praiseworthy. We miss the connection between two sentences, and are obliged to read ahead only to hark back, subsequently, to the gap where we were first arrested. But whether the meaning is clear or not, the translator is forced to add an "and" here, a "but" there, a "however" or a "yet" in a third place; to slip in, now an adverb, now a pronoun, and to substitute nouns for pronouns. One fact was brought home to me with particular, perhaps exaggerated, force—that the German language of to-day is terribly particle-ridden, compared to the English. German *Sprachgefühl* requires infinite padding to be perfectly pleased and happy, and so we have arrived at a point where no sentence seems complete that has not some empty unnatural particle in it to grease the natural joints. Unfortunately a mere translator is the last person whom people will allow to

make experiments. He has to write as if he were not translating.

It would be easy to give numerous examples of sentences where the statement is dwarfed or crippled owing to its exaggerated compactness. I have quoted the paragraph beginning "Our tenacity of national impressions" (p. 12). The construction is impossible in translation, being, obviously, short of a limb. The same applies to this sentence (p. 78): "You may estimate your capacity for Comic perception by being able to detect the ridicule of them you love, without loving them the less." And is not the following, at best, rather unusual (p. 80)? "It differs from humour in not . . . indicating a broader than the range of this bustling world to them." I quote these instances to show that a sentence need not lack clearness merely because it is incomplete; for there can be no doubt as to what is meant here. I rather think that some of Meredith's faults of style might be interpreted into virtues worthy of imitation. We only need to grow used to them. To me they have caused unspeakable trouble; does it not testify in their favour if I say that I feel perfectly friendly towards them?

There are, then, in George Meredith's *Essay on Comedy* many difficulties for a close student of the text. The greatest of all, when it comes to translating this work, however, does not lie in the faultiness, or the carelessness, or the excessive compactness of numerous passages, but in the transcending excellence of as numerous other passages. In none of our author's prose works does his language and style come so near the diction of his poems. The *Essay* teems with a wealth of the most varied poetical figures and conceptions. At every turn some image flashes up to throw light on some fact, some thought, some passing remark. Now Meredith was never in the habit of over-elaborating his metaphors and similes; he did not do so in the *Essay*. The following instance will show how imperfectly a perfect idea can be expressed by him. He is speaking of Molière's "Misanthrope" (p. 46):—

"The life of the comedy is in the idea. As with the singing of the sky-lark out of sight, you must love the bird to be attentive to the song, so in this highest flight of the Comic Muse, you must love pure Comedy warmly to understand 'The Misanthrope.' You must be receptive of the idea of Comedy."

The meaning is abundantly clear. But turn the sentence as you may, the symmetry that is the very soul of a simile is not to be discovered, and the translator, in order to establish the balance, is compelled to insert the missing parts. Mr. Trevelyan quotes, as a good example of Meredithian metaphor, the following (p. 84):—

"Finite and infinite flash from one to the other with him, lending him a two-edged thought that peeps out of his peace-fullest lines by fits, like the lantern of the fire-watcher at windows, going the rounds at night."

If you scan this as closely as a translator must scan his text, you will see that there is more than one metaphor in it. First there is the flashing of light from finite to infinite, and back again. These flashes strike and hit both ways, two-edged. *Two-edged* at once suggests the idea of a sword. This, to be sure, is not mentioned by word; but once conjured up it yet insists on asserting its aggressive nature by putting itself into vivid contrast to the occasional peacefulness of its outward aspect. This peacefulness, in its turn, is taken up in what follows, the peaceful scene of the fire-watcher going his round, and here we are

brought back to the original idea, the flashing to and fro from one object to another.

Thus we find in this one short sentence a whole series of images mutually opposed, but at the same time in mutual juxtaposition, and inextricably intertwined. It should be pointed out, moreover, that the roots of this luxuriant growth are fixed in the preceding sentence, which means that the translator has not done justice to the passage unless he has also made this evident. Indeed, it would require a genius greater than Meredith's to do him justice in translation. Let no one cast rash stones at him who has only half succeeded. It may prove a thankless task, my translation of the *Essay on Comedy*. I am afraid I shall be laughed at for my pains, and fail to achieve the end I had in view (which, by the way, was to furnish the German peoples with an authentic introduction to Meredith's other works, of which the *Essay* is the key). Still, my gain is very great indeed. Not only have I learnt to look at print with a new and clearer eye, as I was bold enough to say above; I have learnt to read Meredith. His books bear a different face to me, his poems no less than his novels, since I battled my way through his stupendous lecture. I had loved him well enough from the beginning, but I love him better now, and with quite another, an infinitely heightened, sense of his beauty. And one thing I have become sure of: that it is not possible to get tired of him. Such a statement from his translator ought to silence the hasty critics who are so over-ready to damn what has puzzled their feeble wits. It is not they who should be heard, but rather those who have "acquired the taste" by long and humbly faithful study. It is a very valuable taste to acquire, I can assure you; a taste that will not prevent you from loving any variety of other good things, although it will make you detest all the more vehemently what is bad and unsound, against which you will have grown unerringly sensitive.

E. D.

REVIEWS

MR. OSCAR BROWNING'S MEMORIES

Memories of Sixty Years at Eton, Cambridge, and Elsewhere.

By OSCAR BROWNING. (John Lane. 16s. net.)

MR. OSCAR BROWNING, most cosmopolitan of dons, has written a really amusing book, and has many good and, what is more, new stories to tell. He tells us of Tennyson, that he wrote the poem of *Lucretius* to "show how an indelicate subject might be treated delicately"; and that when Swinburne's lyrical genius was praised, he said grudgingly, "Yes, he can write French lyrics." Of Robert Browning he has little to record, except that the poet was fond of tracing his family history, which he did with more zeal than knowledge. Unfortunately Robert Browning's ancestry stops short, in the middle of the eighteenth century, at a person who was "resident in the family of Mr. Nugent Bankes, of Corfe Castle"; and the poet's story of a descent from a legendary Browning who commanded the ship which took Henry V. over to France was perhaps the "strangest thing in fiction" the poet ever did. Mr. Oscar Browning also records some oracular words of the poet when walking through the precincts of Clare, and the trees of the Backs burst upon his sight. The poet struck his stick upon the ground and exclaimed emphatic-

ally: "I'll tell you what it is: Oxford is more grand, but Cambridge more grandiose"—and no one has ever discovered what he meant; for the scenery of Cambridge is in no way grandiose.

More interesting are the stories told about Victor Hugo, on the authority of the Russian novelist Turgenev. Hugo was, in some respects, sublimely ignorant, and gloried in it. One day Victor Hugo said: "Ah, Goet, Goet, j'ai lu son 'Wallenstein,'" upon which Turgenev remarked that Schiller, not Goethe, had written "Wallenstein." Hugo said: "Je vous assure, mon cher, que je n'ai jamais lu une ligne de ces Messieurs, mais je les connais comme si je les avais écrits." At another time he said: "Pour moi, je regarde Goet comme Jésus Christ aurait regardé Messaline"; also when Turgenev asked him: "Qui est-ce Galgacus?" (who appears in the poem called "L'Ane," and is a well-known character in Tacitus), Hugo said: "Ma foi! je n'en sais rien, mais c'est un beau nom."

But Mr. Browning is not merely a purveyor of anecdotes of people of importance; he has behind him a long record of self-devotion to unreformed Eton and unreformed Cambridge. His vocation declared itself early, and he has found his supreme interest in education, especially the education of statesmen. For this he steadily and elaborately trained; and there is no doubt that he looks upon Mr. Gerald Balfour and Lord Curzon of Kedleston, whom he taught, as works of his hand, like his publications, such as "Modern England" and "Educational Theories." With such aims, it is interesting to learn Mr. Browning's views upon teaching. "In me," he writes, "education, apart from instruction, consists in literature, and in literature only. . . . The passion for athletics, in my opinion, has now assumed the dimensions of a national calamity." At Eton his efforts to stem the tide of popular opinion in favour of athleticism met with opposition, and relations between him and the head-master became unduly strained, with the result that in 1875 he lost his mastership. "I never worked so hard for anything in my life as I did for what I then believed to be the reformation of Eton," he writes. "I was a democrat then, as I am now; but I recognised that Eton was the training-place for the governing classes, and, foreseeing the future triumph of democracy, I was anxious that the change should come gradually, by reform and not by revolution. To this end it was of paramount importance that the governing classes should preserve something of the culture which had distinguished them in the eighteenth century, and given them a right to control the destinies of the country. I thought I could form a little sanctuary of intellect to withstand the rising tide of Philistine athleticism. Five years more would have enabled me to do this with success, but the gods willed otherwise, and the opportunity was lost, I fear for ever."

At Cambridge, as well as at Eton, Mr. Browning has played the part of an innovator, and his idea of the historical school which was to be the training-ground for citizens and statesmen is admirably stated. Here his intimate relations with undergraduates—due in part to his deliberate purpose as a teacher—were not entirely welcomed by his fellow-teachers. It is at this point that Mr. Browning's good-tempered recollections are tinged with a little judicious malice. It has often been said that there are three cardinal sins which a don may commit, which are never pardoned—to write and speak your own language with correctness and elegance, to be known in the external world, and to have any really intimate knowledge of the

undergraduates. Mr. Browning was obviously guilty on all three counts; and, in addition, his "notorious polymathy" always prevented him from being considered a scholar by his contemporaries; for "it is not so much the knowledge of any particular subjects that gives a man a reputation as the certainty of his ignorance of other subjects."

Yet, though Mr. Browning had not the time to become a great schoolmaster; though his success at Cambridge was a qualified one; though he failed three times to get into Parliament, and his Alpine climbing does not amount to very much; "in respect of a life it is a good life." A man must have rare qualities of character and mind to have kept the friendship of George Eliot and Tennyson, of Robert Browning and Henry Sidgwick, of Mr. Gerald Balfour and Lord Curzon. He is still "the chronic reservoir of copy." If he has remembered a little too much, that is a fault common to all modern memoirs that draw too freely upon the raw material of the diary. The book is personal from beginning to end, yet never self-important or egoistic; indeed, Mr. Browning is not without a talent for self-criticism, to judge by the two undergraduate papers that he appends to his memories. The undergraduate says the last word about him, and congratulates him upon his "marvellous Mahomet's coffin-like poise between two spheres as the don of the undergraduates and the undergraduate of the dons."

SINGING BIRDS

Daily Bread. By WILFRID WILSON GIBSON. Books I. and II. (Mathews. 1s. 6d. net each.)

MR. WILFRID WILSON GIBSON possesses a quiet sort of gift of his own. He has been writing verse for a number of years, and while he has not yet accomplished much that may be considered to stand out, he is not unknown among persons who have a way of thinking of themselves as the elect. In the two volumes before us Mr. Gibson attempts the dramatic poem. We shall not say that he has failed in so far as a certain kind of dramatic effect is concerned, but the poetry is occasionally to seek:—

There's scarce a body left
In all the village.
The cottages were empty,
And every door ajar,
As I came by;
For all the women-folk
Have run to the pit-head.
And I must go;
I cannot stay behind,
Not knowing what is happening.
If there is any news,
I'll bring you word;
Although 'tis feared
There's little hope of rescue.

One hundred and twenty-four pages of this kind of thing is too much. In a rhymed foreword Mr. Gibson informs us that he has

Caught the stormy summons of the sea,
And dared the restless deeps that, day and night,
Surge with the life-song of humanity.

Mr. Gibson was not exactly great before he so caught and dared; but we prefer him as he was.

Thirty-six Poems. By JAMES ELROY FLECKER. (The Adelphi Press. 5s. net.)

This is a small book at a stiff price. On the other hand,

the author is a little bit more of an artist than the average poetling, and, still, on the other hand there is a suggestion of perverseness and morbid inclination about some of his verses which may please the admirers of futility. However, few of the minor company of verse-producers could turn out a lyric like the following:—

TENEBRIS INTERLUCENTEM.

A linnet who had lost her way
Sang on a blackened bough in hell,
Till all the ghosts remembered well
The trees, the wind, the golden day.

At last they knew that they had died
When they heard music in the land,
And someone there stole forth a hand
To draw a brother to his side.

Mr. Flecker may go further as he grows older. At the present moment there is a pronounced flavour of the *New Age* about him.

Out of Hours. By J. M. STUART-YOUNG. (Stockwell. 4s. net.)

THIS volume is adorned with a portrait of the author, and portraits of authors are not as a rule encouraging. Furthermore, there are "sonnets" here:—

Those mornings in the double-bedded room
I never shall forget. My breezy boys,
Wakeful and cheery, apt for play and noise;
Still in their shirts, alive with health and bloom.
Within the garden close the cherry bloom
Of bees in search of dew. My Prince's voice
Chanting a tag; then Albert's legs at poise,
In Highland Fling, across a broken broom.

And while I sit and laugh at them the hiss
Of cooking from the kitchen will ascend.
Like dormice have they slept. But now defend
Who can against their frolic! All the bliss
Of youth is theirs: clear eyes, fresh cheeks—and this,
Best boon of all, a visitor as friend!

Such is life among the poets. "The hiss of cooking from the kitchen" ravishes one.

Poems and Sonnets. By JOSEPH GEOGHEGAN. (Edinburgh: Currie. 2s. 6d. net.)

MR. GEOGHEGAN is a fairly passionate poet, and very keen on love among the roses:

Mine ears with all the sound of woe shut in,
Mine eyes grown duller like a breathed-on glass,
My face hath waxen wan and drawn like sin,
And my mouth moans alas,
Alas, for that curled, cruel, careless mouth
That fastened on these lips of mine like fire,
Which drying, charred and flickered in the drouth,
Pale smoke of pale desire!

And so forth *ad nauseam*. There is a great deal too much honey for the money, Mr. Geoghegan.

Poems. By LEONARD SHOEBRIDGE. (Lane. 3s. 6d. net.)
FIRST among his poems Mr. Shoobridge prints the following:—

Sweet fresh dawn that now is ours,
Where may this new journey lead—
How shall this day seem decreed
At evening hours?

Within the space of tender grey,
One red cloud of sunset's hue
Tells that night shall claim its due,
At close of day.

There is nothing worse in the volume, and only once or

twice something better. We shall not be in a hurry to read "Poems" twice.

The Quest: A Drama of Deliverance. By DOROTHEA HOLLINS. (Williams and Norgate. 4s. 6d. net.)

"THE Quest" will bear perusal. There are passages in it which have a compelling beauty about them, and in the main the blank verse is workmanlike and honest. It seems to us, however, that the drama is spoiled by over-lengthy stage directions or descriptions. In Scene IV., for example, following "Voices of Utopians," we are pulled up on the appended note:

SIR THOMAS MORE is seen advancing through the forest. He is evidently listening to the song: an expression of joyful contentment is on his face, and at the last verse he takes his tablets out of a satchel, and notes down some feature of the music which has specially pleased him. RAPHAEL HYTHLODAY, in the garb of a seafaring man of the sixteenth century, is at a few paces behind SIR THOMAS, in his hand is a compass, which he now and then consults in the dim light.

In view of our poet's excellent intention and the spiritual meaning of her work it would be improper to laugh in this place. But who that is human will forgo the smile? Miss Hollins handles saints quite happily, but she really should be careful with Sir Thomas More.

Farewell to Poesy. By WILLIAM H. DAVIES. (Fifield, 1s. net.)

WE devoutly hope that the title of Mr. Davies's new volume does not mean that he will for the future cease from the business of the Muses. He complains that poesy is deserting him; that the poet in his soul is dying, "and every charm in life is gone."

In vain birds scold and flowers do plead,
The poet dies, his heart doth bleed.

After which apologia, as it were, Mr. Davies proceeds to give us of some of his best, and some of the best in his own *genre* which has been written since Wordsworth. We take the liberty to quote the following piece:

THE IDIOT AND THE CHILD.

There was a house where an old dame
Lived with a son, his child and wife;
And with a son of fifty years,
An idiot all his life.

When others wept this idiot laughed,
When others laughed he then would weep;
The married pair took oath his eyes
Did never close in sleep.

Death came that way, and which, think you,
Fell under that old tyrant's spell?
He breathed upon that little child
Who loved her life so well.

This made the idiot chuckle hard:
The old dame looked at that child dead
And him she loved. "Ah, well; thank God
It is no worse," she said.

Mr. Davies may bid Poesy farewell to his heart's content; but he may take it from us that she has by no means finished with him yet. He should be proud and thankful for the favours which this volume proves her to have bestowed upon him. We shall shortly print a longer notice of Mr. Davies's work.

MAN, THE BRUTE, IN FICTION

It would be an amusing, if not an instructive, study to take a census of the brutal men who figure in modern fiction, especially in woman-made fiction. In the pages of the average novel, man is invariably the villain and woman the victim. For him love, devotion, and sacrifice—for her callousness, desertion, and brutality. Were one to judge humanity from novels, he would conclude that in the relations between man and woman there is rarely a case in which the man does not gain everything and the woman forfeit all. At the present time there is a craze for the story dealing with the illicit love of some beautiful-souled girl for some despicable scoundrel. In each case the woman wishes to "express herself," and as it is obvious to the author that self-expression cannot be found in the beaten ways of matrimony, it is essential that the two should agree to live together "without benefit of clergy." To the average layman there would seem plenty of opportunities for "self-expression" in a respectable union, but the ways of the novelist are unlike the ways of other people, and hence it is laid down almost with the force of an axiom that the "parties" shall express themselves unmarried. This is the beginning. The story then goes on to show the amenities and hostilities which arise from such unions, and in this respect it undoubtedly comes near the truth, for whenever two frail beings are thrown together for any length of time, it is almost inevitable that some disagreement should occur. The falsity to life, however, is shown in the ending, where the man invariably tires of the union whilst the woman is more passionately devoted than at the beginning. Ethically, this presentation of life is untrue. Experience, of course, teaches us that men grow weary of such unions more frequently than women, but it is not always so. There are myriads of cases where the reverse happens, where the woman wearies of her companion and seeks love (or what the novelists call love) elsewhere. After all, if such things happen when people are married, why should they not happen when they are unmarried, and when there is no legal obligation on the woman to remain loyal to the man whom she has chosen? It is more than possible that if a record were taken of the endings of such irregular ménages, it would be found that in at least forty per cent. of the cases the woman, and not the man, was the first to grow weary of the yoke. Here, then, is a chance for the youthful novelist who desires to be startlingly original, and who yet would paint the truth of things. Let him evolve a story in which a man and girl, eager after that mysterious condition known as "self-expression," start out on an illicit love adventure. Let him show how each month tends to deepen the passion of the man, whilst the woman grows colder. Let him give us a final scene in which the woman is the deserter, and the man the deserted. He will call down on his head, of course, some heavy abuse from feminine critics of both sexes, but at least, he will have struck a blow for the truth. His book may not sell, but a presentation of fact does not often achieve a commercial success, for, although truth is stranger than fiction, it rarely pays as well. The success of the halfpenny newspapers proves this fact beyond all question.

There can be no doubt that the tendency to emphasise the villainous side of man in his relations with women is a relic of an influence which the modern realistic writer would never suspect, viz., the influence of ancient melodrama. In that lurid region the male is invariably a satyr and the female a saint. He pursues, seizes, enjoys, and deserts. The modern author may have forgotten that he has ever seen a melodrama, but for all that the taint remains in his blood. Therefore, man the villain, and woman the victim—these are the everlasting subjects of his work. If we turn from the pages of novels and look at real life we find a different picture. There we behold the truth which proclaims that man is victimised by

woman quite as often as woman by man. Not, perhaps, in the sexual direction, because Nature (like the novelist) certainly shows a sneaking partiality for men in that regard, and in any question of an illicit relation the female, of course, has the worst of the bargain. But surely there are other relations besides the relations of sex. What about the man who allies himself to a drunken woman, whose home is ruined by her excesses, and whose daily life is rendered a martyrdom? What about the man who marries an extravagant wife and whose swift bankruptcy is brought about by her constant inroads on his purse? What of the unhappy fellow who finds himself bound to a "nagging" partner, whose shrill tones seem like the reproaches of fiends? Surely these men are victims all, and they outnumber by an enormous majority the few who wreck the lives of women by seduction or desertion. We do not find them often, however, in the pages of modern novels. They are ignored, except in a few unimportant cases. And yet the dramatic element is not wanting, and such subjects should form admirable themes for the writer who could do justice to them. The truth of the matter is that the realistic novelist is not realistic at all in the larger sense. He studies his daily newspaper and attends the police-court with a view to getting at life as it is, but he forgets that the majority of mankind does not figure in the newspaper or in the police-court. He beholds in the dock a brute charged with assaulting his wife, and he goes home and writes a story to prove that every woman who marries in the lower classes is the victim of such treatment. He does not know (poor ignorant fellow) that there are hundreds, nay thousands, hidden away in obscure tenements and grimy lodgings whose daily lives are ennobled by devotion to invalid wives. But then, of course, these husbands do not appear at police-courts. They may be frequently seen, however, at hospitals, bringing with them flowers and dainties bought with their trivial earnings. The majority of mankind is good—the exceptions are bad.

This is a truth which the so-called realist does not know or wilfully ignores. Dickens knew it, Thackeray knew it, Fielding knew it, and so did all the great ones whose work bears the stamp of immortality. When the modern writer recognises this truth he will probably hold the scales more evenly. He will cease to describe man as the invariable villain—and woman as the everlasting victim. After all, the continual process is wearisome, if nothing else. It would be interesting to examine all the "sex" novels which have appeared, say, in the last twelvemonth, and to tabulate the respective brutalities of the men and the women there. It would be safe to say, at a venture, that for each story showing the victimisation of a man by a woman there would be at least twenty showing the reverse. The majority of these books are written by women, and the ignorance of life which is displayed therein is, after all, not surprising; for what can the self-respecting woman know of these things? She can only be guided by other novels (as false as her own), by hearsay, which is always misleading, and by newspaper reports, which are mere distorting mirrors, in that they are so diabolically hostile to the truth. The inner truth of things can be acquired only by experience or by actual contact with the experienced. There is no other route, though instinct may sometimes aid with brilliant guesswork. But guesswork is apt to be inaccurate and only approximate. After a long course of such novels one begins to believe that every man is branded with the mark of the beast, and one experiences something like a shock of pleasure when one beholds a working-man leading his crippled wife by the arm, or a clubman enjoying a little dinner with his wife at the Carlton. One realises that here is life, and that it is being lived thus in every corner of the world. The average man is not a brute—he treats women kindly; he does not ruin and ride away. The novelist, and especially the woman novelist, declares that the reverse is the truth, not merely occasionally (which, of course, would be perfectly correct as a statement of fact), but invariably and inevitably. A little knowledge of life and logic and the

sequence of emotion would dispel this grotesque and horrible belief. But life, logic, and the sequence of emotion are the very things of which the modern novelist knows least, though he believes that he cares a good deal.
P. B.

A GEORGIAN LEGACY

THERE was a time when England revelled in decorum, when the beau knew how to balance morality on a pin's point, when the vices of men lost half their evil by losing all their grossness. There was a time when women affected an artistic propriety, when more than one Miss Pinkerton kept an academy for young ladies, when Fanny Burney watched, with mischievous twinkle in her eyes, the "pretty smiling Penelopes" who were busy with their needles in the Royal Palace. It was somewhere about that time that a meditative physician of Edinburgh, having equipped himself with a varied experience of life, prepared to leave the stage like a polished gentleman and a perfect father. That time has passed with all its aching joys, its gorgeous contrasts, its wondrous piety, and its pardonable sins. Waterloo had not been fought, and all this fundamental gruffness and impatience of the Saxon mind was still reserved for foreign uses. It was a period in which a man's pent up energies were bound to find some outlet, and he who could no longer set a bad example invariably began to offer good advice. Many a little life was rounded with a treatise on that form of respectability—they called it morality in those days—whose highest sanctions were elegance and good taste. Dr. Gregory is forgotten—his "Comparative View of the State of Man and Other Animals," his "Essay on the Office and Duties of a Physician," and his "Father's Legacy to his Daughters," having fallen into a worse category than that of Charles Lamb's *biblia abiblia*, which find a mummified repose in the ornamental library of every man of fashion. The "Legacy," at all events, does not rest in peace. It is doomed for a certain time to walk the night, and its post-mortem peregrinations are confined to the unsavoury labyrinths of London alleys. In them, it is true, it meets congenial company at times. There is a ghoulish pleasure in its look when it nestles between some dog-eared Drelin-court "On Death," and a candle-greasy copy of Young's "Night Thoughts." It is smug with satisfaction when its form is dimly seen among the unread tomes of Parson Blair and Dr. South, but there's *fripounerie* even in these gloomy haunts, and often a cavalier poet will come the way to the lascivious pleasing of a lute, or a De Grammont, disreputably clad, will squat among divines. Gregory has seen better days. Once he kept as good company as any man. Here he is in death, still with a Court suit—a trifle threadbare now—the Royal Arms branded upon his back and the bookplate of a peer tucked inside his coat. He had been to many a Georgian levee, he had audiences of the Farmer King; and a good-natured monarch, with a willing spirit but a very weak flesh, once hung upon his words and commended his precepts to the Penelopes when they tired of Ogden's homilies. Virtue has its tragedies as well as vice, and Gregory is one of them. A century ago his dicta for young ladies might have stood against the world. Now lies he cobwebbed in the penny box of a squalid bookstall, and none so poor to do him reverence.

It is good to lend an ear to Gregory. He lived among our grandmothers, and the world went very well then, and we feel that no other age can ever produce women more lovable, more picturesque, and, on the whole, more sensible. It is to be regretted that historians, perhaps through jealousy, have neglected the influence of our grandmothers upon the destinies of England. Not so with Gregory. He did as much as any man could to be a grandmother. Pictured in a strange wood-cut, he stands upon the threshold of the death chamber, in the act of presenting to a couple of high-waisted daughters, who have fallen on their knees in reverence, a fully bound volume of valedictory advice. "I know mankind," he says, with the

riefful visage of one on whom inexorable Nature is wreaking gouty vengeance, "I know their falsehood, their dissipation, their coldness to all the duties of friendship and humanity," and he turns to the consolations of religion. He has his own views on ladylike deportment and occupations. He declines to look upon women as "domestic drudges," and demands for them their place as man's "companions and equals." It is painful to reflect that Gregory was not honest. Possibly it was because he did not live in days entirely honest on these points. "Women," said Chesterfield, "are to be talked to as below men and above children." That is Gregory's opinion, too; but he will not confess. "Though the duties of religion," he observes, "are, strictly speaking, equally binding on both sexes, yet certain differences in their natural character and education render some vices in your sex particularly odious." Equality is excellent in theory, but it must be avoided in practice. "One of the chief beauties of the female character is that modest reserve, that retiring delicacy which avoids the public eye, and is disconcerted even at the gaze of admiration. When a girl ceases to blush she has lost the most powerful charm of beauty. A fine woman, like other fine things in nature, has her proper point of view. To fix this point requires great judgment and an intimate knowledge of the human heart. By the present mode of female manners, the ladies seem to expect that they shall regain their ascendancy over us, by the fullest display of their personal charms, by being always in our eye at public places, by conversing with us with the same unreserved freedom as we do with one another; in short, by resembling us as nearly as they possibly can." There is a fascinating suggestion of reform in Gregory's admonitions. If any man knew his subject, he did; if any man pursued virtue in his youth, as he pursued the fox, with a view to its courteous extinction, it was the Edinburgh physician; but with death staring him in the face and with three daughters to marry by means of posthumous advice, he was compelled to moralise—inconsistently. "What is commonly called love among you," he says, "is rather gratitude," and, strangely enough, he refrained from adding that gratitude was a sense of favours to come. "Love is not to begin on your part, but is entirely to be the consequence of our attachment to you. As Nature has not given you that unlimited range in your choice which we enjoy, she has wisely and benevolently assigned to you a greater flexibility of taste on this subject. A man of taste and delicacy marries a woman because he loves her more than any other. A woman of equal taste and delicacy marries him because she esteems him." The unprincipled Bolingbroke never said anything more suave with his tongue in his cheek. O Gregory, Gregory, so surely as your daughters wept, as the artist has painted them, floods of natural tears upon the hideous sarcophagus in which your bones were decently inurned, they loved without ceremony and wedded without calculation. And, having learned your lachrymose sentences by heart, is there a man or a woman who could blame them did they outrage convention by runaway matches?

THE BLESSING OF THE ROSES

THERE are few prettier *festas* still to be seen in Southern Europe than the Blessing of the Roses, which takes place in the Duomo of Florence on May 25—the feast day of San Zenobio. It is the time of roses; they are blooming in every garden of the City of Flowers, all along the steep cypress-bordered Via Crucis that climbs to San Miniato, and on the way to San Domenico and Fiesole with her crown of towers. From all the country round the market women bring the great fragrant baskets, and the roses are piled in great heaps in the cool, cavernous doorways of the Duomo. A continuous stream of people are crossing the sunny square to one of the two great portals, each buys a bunch of roses, and vanishes in the dim grey interior. In the centre of the nave a space is railed round and a tem-

porary altar erected. All round the outside of the enclosure stand the people with their roses, and within the enclosure a priest attended by his acolytes moves round the circle with the silver bust of San Zenobio containing his relics. Each worshipper holds up a bunch of roses to touch the relic and be blessed by the priest, and then moves away, leaving his place for another. In the vast space of the Duomo there is room for these shifting currents of people to move about without disturbance. On the dim greyness of the walls a few things emerge—Luca della Robbia's lovely reliefs of the Ascension and Resurrection over the sacristy doors, the equestrian portrait of Sir John Hawkwood (the Englishman) and his brother-captain Niccolò da Tolentino, and Michelino's famous picture of Dante with the Mount of Purgatory in the background. Behind the altar is the shrine of St. Zenobius, a masterpiece of Ghiberti, adorned with the flying angels in which he delighted. Above the light filters into the huge dome from the stained glass windows designed by Ghiberti and Donatello, and just behind the high altar facing the shrine is Michael Angelo's awful *Piùta*. On the first pillar in the left aisle is a picture of St. Zenobius enthroned with his disciples Eugenius and Crescentius; and on the corresponding pillar of the right aisle is the effigy of another famous and saintly bishop of Florence, St. Antoninus, the contemporary of Fra Angelico. While the Blessing of the Roses proceeds in the nave the canons and choristers are singing the daily office from a huge ancient vellum music-book, gorgeously illuminated, and mounted on a revolving wooden stand. Then the lights on the high altar shine out one by one, the people gather in front of the railings, the clergy go up to the altar, the great Action begins. After Mass comes the procession, when with banners and music and lights in huge candlesticks the silver bust of St. Zenobius is carried under a canopy up the church and solemnly placed on the high altar. The relics remain exposed during the day, and about four in the afternoon they are replaced in the shrine under the altar of the Blessed Sacrament.

St. Zenobius was one of the early bishops of Florence, a contemporary of St. Ambrose of Milan, who came often to visit him in the little church outside the walls—on the site of the present San Lorenzo—where he lived a life of fasting and prayer. "Cross of wood and bishop of gold," runs the rhyme of the fifteenth century, looking back to the days of primitive perfection in the Church when she possessed such bishops as Zenobius. Born a pagan, he sacrificed on his conversion the great wealth that he had inherited. He was made by Pope Damasus one of the seven deacons who shared the administration of the great Roman Church, and was afterwards sent as Legate to Constantinople. From that high office he passed to the bishop's chair in Florence. When Rhadagisus and his 200,000 Goths advanced upon the city in 405 A.D. it was to their bishop that the terrified people turned, and to his prayers that they attributed their deliverance. Like the host of Sennacherib, the vast host melted away, by the act of God, as it seemed, rather than by the hand of man. Zenobius died in 424 A.D., and was buried at San Lorenzo among the poor to whom he had so faithfully ministered; but his successor, Bishop Andrew, deemed it meet to give his body sepulture in the Cathedral church. The miracle which monkish writers declare to have been performed by his remains deeply impressed the popular imagination, and is recorded again and again by Florentine artists, notably by Ridolfo Ghirlandajo in his superb picture in the Uffizi. The legend runs that as the corpse of the good bishop was being borne to its rest the pressure of the crowd caused the bearers to stumble, the coffin burst open, and the body of Zenobius touched an elm tree which stood in the way. Immediately the elm tree burst into flower and leaf, and the people broke off pieces of the miraculous tree till not a fragment was left. But in order that the miracle should be kept in perpetual remembrance, a pillar of marble surmounted by a cross was set up where the elm tree had stood. The pillar was swept away early in the fourteenth century by

the great flood which destroyed the ancient statue of Mars at the Ponte Vecchio, but it was soon replaced. Even to this day the memorial of St. Zenobius stands in the midst of the traffic of one of the busiest streets of Florence, just to the north of the Baptistery.

THE SHIP

CHAUCER'S Shipman was not the last of his race to spin a yarn. A fold of his mantle covers the first voyage apprentice, as adoring sisters and cousins can testify. Even the superannuated shipmaster loitering in Fenchurch Street in a creased suit of blue serge has the knack, slightly blunted by exercise upon shore-keeping associates. The freshness of sea romance will not become stale as long as he retains his natural conception of the ocean as a friendly expanse of water, intersected by orderly streams of traffic, and the Channel as a dangerously over-crowded, but well policed, thoroughfare leading to uncharted inland spaces. That is a perspective which escapes the nautical romancer as distinguished from the nautical who romances. The landsman pictures the sea as an extension of our insular coastline, or as a trackless region lying beyond an imaginary line between Southend and the Nore, where anything is possible in the way of adventure. His imagination swings between the Johnsonian definition of a ship as "a prison with the chance of being drowned," and her vision as "the cradle of the rude imperious surge." And yet he starts with a sure insular advantage, for he is well served by the vocabulary of the sea. The most ordinary shore-keeping person is stirred by the associations contained within the four corners of the sturdy Anglo-Saxon word "ship," derived by the learned from the root *skip*, cf. *scoop*, thereby, it is to be feared, robbing an anonymous citizen of Boston, Mass., of some legendary fame. For the story goes that in 1745 one Andrew Robertson of that port launched a vessel fitted with two masts and carrying a sloop sail on each. As she sped gracefully from the ways, her easy motion prompted a spectator to remark, "See how she scoons." And her builder, who was at a loss for a name for the new type, gratefully replied, "A schooner let her be." It is instructive of the cleavage of a narrow strip of water that on the other side of the Channel the same root should have degenerated into the puerile *esquif*—a toy as suitable for a *promenade en mer* as unfitted for the serious business of navigation. But not much better is to be expected from a nation which takes the fore-t'-gallant-s'l, beloved of semi-nautical writers, and makes it ridiculous as *le petit perroquet*, and transforms the blunt and manly Mister Mate into the empty courtesy of *Monsieur le sous-capitaine*. Under the circumstances one hesitates before placing to their credit the distinctly ingenious derivation of "jury rig,"—that is *jour-y*, or *pro tem*.

Dampfschiff is explosive and Teutonic, very expressive of a practical race of ocean carriers who possess a coastline which might easily be overlooked and have no sea history to speak of. *Piroscafo*, on the other hand, is not so bad—for a Latin people. It carries with it a suggestion of illicit adventure and of predatory craft laden to the hatches with other people's goods, just as all galleons to the properly constituted imagination are ballasted with doubloons. One might coast the Adriatic with great joy by *piroscafo*, were it not for the odorous company of Latin emigrants. It is when the individual ship is considered that one is inclined to suggest a censorship as far as the drudges of the merchant marine are concerned. The efforts of an aged collier to live up to "Amaryllis" or "Euphrosyne" reflect no credit on her owner, heir of a line of sea adventurers though she may be. Her case is as pathetic as that of the unfortunate Augusta who is born pert, and the semi-detached suburban villa in possession of an owner with a fancy for mediæval nomenclature. But at least she adheres to the line of tradition. A ship without a name would be a sport of nature. When the first shipbuilder, after careful observation of the behaviour of an empty shell, stepped into his hollowed tree trunk and found that it floated buoyantly, his next idea was to personify the thing which

he had created. That some ships remain anonymous—the ships of Tarshish bringing gold, and the Alexandrian ship in which Paul set sail for Rome—is accidental. The omission at once betrays the historians of a race which never has had a taste for sea adventure. It has always seemed an unaccountable lapse—and in the spacious age of Elizabeth—that Antonio, when informed that "Three of your argosies are richly come to harbour suddenly," did not at once demand the names of these fortunate arrivals of his overdue fleet. Apart from that the ship has always been well treated by imaginative artists. There is the "Argo," ship of the Argonauts, built of the pines of Pelion, and the magic coracle, the "Wavesweeper," in which the three sons of Tuirenn voyaged in search of the three apples from the garden of the Hesperides, in the east of the world. Frithjof's ship "Ellida" understood what was said to her, and obeyed spoken commands. The understanding between ship and shipmen has remained close ever since. It has even survived the passing of the wide-winged clipper of the day before yesterday, although that is a heresy in the eyes of old-fashioned mariners, for the ship-builder's art has always been an imitative and therefore a conservative one. The earliest dug-out was modelled on a floating shell, the first Roman fleet built on the lines of a wrecked Carthaginian ship of war, the famous tea clippers of the sixties followed the dimensions of the Yankee "Oriental." In her time the new and ungainly quinquere was severely criticised from the benches of the handy bireme, just as the modern steel carrier has not yet had time to come into the romantic picture. But the soul of the ship has outlived them all, whether cased in Norwegian fir or English oak or a scientific arrangement of girders and steel plating.

MEALS

"EATING," said Alexander the Great, "makes us feel twice mortal!" And, surely, the ingenious person who first be-thought himself of dubbing school "the place of leisure," and complimenting the Furies on their "gracious" disposition, would sympathise with (if he did not absolutely admire!) our habit of alluding to meals as "festive occasions." Who that has ever watched our timid propitiatory ritual, extending generally over several hours, and comprising the scrupulous selection of the right dress, the right company, and the right dinner-pill, can be in doubt as to the real attitude of civilised man towards meals? And though we say civilised man advisedly, in view of the melancholy fact that some "savage survivals" will still attack that ruling power of the day, their "chief meal," in the unwinking glare of a harvest-field or the piquant atmosphere of a fried-fish shop, such reckless impiety is only the exception which brings the rule into stronger relief, and causes the wise among us to remember with satisfaction that Nemesis has not outgrown her lameness, and that any delay in annihilating these "despisers of the gods" can be explained as *delay* only!

The painful necessity of ceremonious meals, as opposed to the mere haphazard joy of "snacks," must have dawned quite early on primitive man! Indeed, we venture to think it must have been forced on him by his peculiar circumstances. Few of those prehistoric beasts who now people our museums could have furnished the sort of meat to be bolted easily in sandwiches or sucked in tabloid form. And though the thoughts of the jaded diner-out may be pardoned for turning longingly towards that primitive meal, hunted perspiringly all day and slept off stertorously all night, surely this is only distance at its old tricks again. It would be a libel on the average mammoth to suppose him incapable of providing the equivalent of six courses and a savoury; a meal, even in the embryonic stage of development, must have contained all the awful possibilities of its kind; and, in short, when *Homo sapiens* returned to the cave-home at night-fall, lugging the dinner with him, if it had not yet become essential (or, indeed, possible) to lay a table, it must have been highly desirable to observe some order of precedence round the pot!

If we are to draw any comparison at all between the primitive banquet and the modern one it can only be, we fear, the one commonly drawn between the serpent's egg and the full-grown serpent. All the arduous dinner-ceremonies enumerated above are traceable to the fact that roasted saurian and stewed pterodactyl took, six nights out of seven, the revenge dear to vast bulks and petty minds. It could not have been long before our cave-dwelling ancestor discovered that the dropping-in of guests (chiefly self-invited, and armed with more effective means of admission than a mere subscription ticket) modified, in some measure, the horrors of his midnight dreams; and there and then must have begun the self-protective practice of dining in state, and of giving an effusive welcome to company whom it was impossible to keep out, but not impossible to utilise. It is easy to see that "pot-luck" could have been no empty phrase in those days. The man who took it, took a distinct risk, and would certainly, if legal formalities had been in fashion, have followed Dr. Johnson's advice and "signed his will before he supped from home." For what more simple, under the cloak of an ardent hospitality, than to press on your guests' acceptance those portions of the "joint" known to experience as the surest assassins of a night's rest? And what more natural, if here and there a guest proved so blind to his true interests as to oppose your wishes, than to enforce them by some ingenious tale of the virtues attached to those portions?

There is, for example, the carefully preserved dogma relating to a lion's heart. Hackneyed now, and (we are ashamed to confess) of little practical use to a generation which regards even a sheep's heart, stuffed, with some little diffidence, we can still imagine the electric thrill which went through its "first night audience," and the festive clash of flint spoons, as one tribesman after another fished the pot in the hope of bringing up the coveted mascot. For he who swallowed the lion's heart was to gain the lion's courage. We can only say, from the depths of our own, that we hope he did gain it. Few men (when once the swallowing was an accomplished fact) could have needed it more.

But it will be obvious to the least penetrating among us that these harrowing reflections are not without a compensating charm. Once viewed as a trick of atavism and a sympathetic hark-back to the sufferings of some daring ancestor in the First Stone Age, dyspepsia itself becomes a motive for family pride; and those anxious forebodings and peculiar nervous thrills with which so many of us approach a dinner table, a proof of lion-hearted and undaunted lineage beside which Norman blood and seven quarterings are not worthy to be named.

Readers of the "Anatomy of Melancholy" will observe that the author of that optimistic work, together with the authorities on diet quoted therein, was of exceptionally gallant descent. Most of us have our own little "black list" of food-taboos, our "totems" whose dignity we respect too much to wrestle with them in the processes of digestion; but the sage Burton, with all the College of Ancient Physicians to back him, has pointed out, with no faltering hand, the rank unwisdom of wrestling with any food at all.

For instance (in the opinion of Galen), no one who does not wish to fall into "gross melancholy" ought to meddle with beef; and though the same authority admits pork to be "most nutritious in his own nature," this must only have added to the pang he felt in denouncing it as "altogether unfit for such as live at ease," and as "likely to breed a quartan ague." Savonarola, without torturing himself or us with painful particulars, "discommends" goat's flesh; and Rhesus and Magninus do the same by all varieties of fish. Hart and red deer "hath an evil name," and venison, though "a pleasant meat and much esteemed in our solemn feasts," is "all melancholy, all bad." "Good outside, like hypocrites," is the verdict on fowls. Hare "causeth fearful dreams," and rabbits are glanced at, in passing, as "of the nature of hares."

Of fruits we learn that "Crato objects to them all," and Pythagoras follows suit with his famous "A fabis abstineto!"—"Have nothing to do with beans."

Roots "trouble the mind and make men mad," though some bold spirits, who (perhaps from motives of prudence) prefer to remain anonymous, "approve of parsnips and potatoes."

Spices "cause head-melancholy," and, though there is no precise accusation against salt, we are significantly told that the Egyptian priests abstained from it "to keep their minds undisturbed." After this it is but small consolation to know that Paulus Jovus, though he "abhorreth eels at all times, and in all places," has nothing to say against lampreys, and that Catherinus and Arnoldus "tolerate lettuce"!

For to furnish four meals a day from these materials, and to give to each of them the thrilling interest of variety, would surely require a culinary genius too great to have given himself as yet "the trouble to be born!" We do not even think that the addition of beer (for which the learned Burton seems to have had a harmless fondness, and for whose sake he defies the College of Physicians so far as to remark that "let them say what they list, 'tis a pleasant drink") would go far towards solving the problem. But then, what need to solve it! Surely it is permissible to recognise in this cautious and learned indictment our worthy scholar's way of striking a blow for freedom, and of undermining the tyranny of the formal meal by making its formalities superfluous? Who would sound a gong for lampreys? Who wear an evening tie for lettuce? As for the "pleasant drink" already mentioned, its most ardent supporters are agreed that its truest province is to cheer that dreary waste and howling wilderness commonly known as "between meals"; and an Age of Freedom, in which the abolition of meals at fixed times and fixed places would be a marked feature, need not, so far as we can see, interfere with its legitimate mission.

It must be reluctantly admitted, however, that Burton's antagonism to meals seems founded chiefly on an antagonism to food! He would have shared Byron's opinion that the most melancholy hour of the twenty-four was the hour "when dinner had oppressed one." But, oppressions apart, and the more carnal question of foods apart, who will venture to say that the history of meals—their rise and progress and outstanding landmarks, so to speak—is such as to warrant their retention in a civilised state? An instructive volume could well be compiled—or if, unknown to our ignorance, already compiled, well become popular—on "Famous Meals of all Ages which ended badly for one or more of the Persons Concerned." And here, among many other high and noble histories, would be laid up the record of the supper parties of Heliogabalus, to which the adroit introduction of live leopards at dessert lent so much pleasing originality; the drinking bout which robbed Alexander of his best friend; the luncheons of Cæsar Borgia; and the wedding feast at the rural manor of Clapham, where King Hardicanute was, as we say in the West Country, so unexpectedly "took with a fit."

The only drawback to such an enterprise would be the difficulty of setting bounds to it. For which of us has not his own private feud against the social meal, or failed to experience at some period of his life its exceptional opportunities for reviving ancient quarrels, airing painful subjects, and giving bad news their best possible chance of producing some really effective results? The editor of any such work would inevitably be inundated by correspondents urging him to find space for those memorable family dinners at which, by mere chance, the conversation turned on the wills of deceased grandparents, or those charity teas where it was discovered by pure accident that the local Lancelots were arrant cowards, and the resident Galahads hopeless rakes! People occasionally fall out at funerals, weddings are notoriously exacerbating, and even christenings (where ex-heirs are concerned!) have been known, in Burton's phrase, to "breed gross melancholy"; but as a subtle magnet for what is commonly known as "scenes," and for words which, as the Greek dramatist euphemistically puts it, "lead up to annoyance for some-

one," few people will refuse to admit that meal-times are without a rival.

We commend to the notice of an inventive generation the crying need of some effective substitute for this (at present) necessary evil. Why should not the removal of it, with its attendant perils, gastronomical and psychological, be among the watchwords of our emancipated future? A network of tubes and pipes (somewhat on the plan of the municipal gas and water supplies), conveying nourishment in a solvent form, and enabling meals to be imbibed, at any moment, without loss of time or conscious efforts at festivity, is surely not too much to ask where the interests at stake are so enormous!

Pocket-mouthpieces for attaching to the terminal taps might meet the requirements of the weaklings, to whom some remnant of ancient custom was still dear; but we have every confidence that the bolder spirits would rapidly be led on to welcome the "Nourishing Hose" or "Bath and Meal Combined," by which the essential virtues of a meat breakfast, a mid-day lunch, and an aldermanic dinner could be sprayed on to the body in the course of three minutes, and the recipient enabled to set out at once on his triumphant meal-less course, unhampered by the obligation of feeling "twice mortal" every four hours, or facing, at the close of an already laborious day, the prospect of taking the family skeleton in to dinner.

MEETINGS OF SOCIETIES

PHYSICAL SOCIETY OF LONDON.

Proceedings at the meeting held April 22, Prof. H. L. Callendar, F.R.S., President, in the chair.

Mr. W. A. Scooble read a paper entitled "Further Tests of Brittle Materials under Combined Stress." A former paper described tests on cast iron, which is the brittle material which is most commonly employed in engineering practice. The cast iron yielded somewhat, and it was necessary to assume a redistribution of stress before fracture. Then the maximum principal stress appeared to be the best criterion of strength. The tests described in the present paper were made on hardened cast steel, which material was selected because it obeys Hooke's Law to fracture. The specimens were $\frac{3}{4}$ inch diameter and 30 inches effective length, and were tested under combined bending and torsion. As it was not possible to ensure that the hardened bars were of exactly equal strengths, a bar was first fractured under combined loading, then one portion was tested under bending alone, and the other part in simple torsion. Thus each bar afforded independent evidence on the law of failure. Neither the maximum shear stress nor the maximum strain was constant at fracture, but the results indicated that the maximum principal stress is the best criterion of strength for a brittle material under combined stress. In general, the hardening did not affect the strength of a bar to resist bending, but it doubled the torque which was required to cause failure. Dr. Russell asked the author for a definition of a brittle material. Mr. R. S. Whipple asked what were the advantages of hardening in vitriol. Mr. Scooble, in reply, said a brittle material was one which did not yield before fracture, although cast iron, which was usually classed as brittle, yielded to a slight extent. Tool hardeners found that hardening in vitriol was preferable to hardening in oil.

A paper on "The Magnetic Balance of MM. Curie and C. Cheneveau, by C. Cheneveau, with an Appendix by A. C. Jolley," was read by Mr. A. C. Jolley. This balance is intended for the determination of the co-efficient of specific magnetization, susceptibility, and permeability of feebly paramagnetic and diamagnetic bodies. The body under investigation is suspended from one arm of a torsion balance, which measures the force exerted on the body when it is placed in the non-uniform field of a permanent magnet. The torsion balance is formed by a horizontal

rod suspended by a long fine platinum wire and carrying at one end a hook from which the substance under investigation can be suspended in a small enclosing glass tube. On the other end of the torsion arm a copper sector is fixed, which moves between the poles of an auxiliary magnet and thus provides efficient damping. A second branch arm is also provided upon which may be placed suitable counterweights to balance the specimen. The suspension carries a mirror, and the movements are read on a translucent scale in the ordinary way. The magnetic field is that of a large circular permanent magnet mounted in such a way that the vertical gap may be made to describe a semi-circle of radius equal to the length of the torsion arm, and the movements of this magnet are controlled by the observer at the screen by means of cords. An empty containing tube is first mounted on the balance, and the maximum deviation of both sides of the zero is obtained by bringing up the magnet towards each side of the specimen. The tube is now filled to a given mark with a known mass of pure distilled water and the variations observed as before. The water is now replaced by a known mass of the substance to be examined, occupying the same volume or the same vertical height, and again the deviations are observed. The paper indicates how the value of K may be calculated from these observations. Experiments have been performed with various metals and alloys, and the results are tabulated and discussed in the paper.

Mr. A. Campbell said that for certain experiments, and in the construction of certain instruments, it was essential to know that the materials used were non-magnetic; and he thought the author's instrument would be useful. It was very difficult to obtain non-magnetic brass. Mr. W. Duddell asked if the specimens used were specially cleaned, as the oxides and sulphides of many metals were magnetic. It would also be necessary to keep them clean to get trustworthy results. Mr. D. Owen expressed a doubt as to the accuracy of the results attainable by this apparatus used as described by the authors in the paper. Theory requires that the specimens of the standard substance and that under test should be exactly equal in size and shape, and similarly situated in the variable magnetic field when the observation of maximum force is taken. In many ways this condition may be departed from in the experiments described. The size of the test-tube used to hold the specimen is a considerable fraction of the interpolar space, and, excepting in the case of liquids, it would be difficult to ensure identity of form of the samples in the correlated pair of experiments. Absence of coincidence between the axis of rotation of the magnet and the axis of the torsion wire would cause an error of position varying with the deflection of the balance-arm. Again, the magnetic pull parallel to the balance-arm will cause movement of the specimen to an extent depending on its susceptibility and its density, though the effect is likely to be very small. These causes may account for the authors' observations of apparent dependence of K on the mass and length of specimen. The authors were also asked whether they had any experimental data as to the independence of K with respect to temperature.

Dr. Russell regretted that the author had not explained more fully how the magnetization of the specimen under test was maintained uniform. Any lack of uniformity would seriously affect the accuracy of the results. He thought that the great discrepancies found by Mr. Jolley in the apparent value of the co-efficient of the specific magnetization of copper for specimens of different lengths must be due to an uneven distribution of the magnetic field. When the specimens were very feebly magnetic, he considered that it was legitimate to make the assumption that the intensity of the magnetization was proportional to the field. He did not see, however, how the balance could be employed to test strongly magnetic substances. He suggested that the specific magnetization of water might vary largely with temperature. It was interesting to find that the discrepancies between the calculated and the observed values of the inductance of a

certain brass conductor had been traced to the magnetic qualities of the brass. In his opinion errors in the computed values of inductance standards, due to the permeability of the conducting material differing from unity by a very small fraction, would in general be negligible.

The Secretary read a letter from Dr. C. V. Drysdale, in which he stated that Mr. Jolley's experiments with the magnetic balance proved its value, both scientifically and commercially, as a means of rapidly estimating the composition and purity of alloys and other materials. The instrument enabled the magnetic qualities of materials to be obtained as easily as the specific gravity measurements which are usually employed as an aid to practical analysis, and it formed a kind of magnetic hydrometer which gave the specific magnetization instead of the density of the substance as compared with water. The displacement principle of Poisson and the derivation of the force as the slope of potential were both of great importance, and an apparatus such as the author's which showed the practical application of these principles was welcome. Mr. C. W. S. Crawley drew attention to the fact that if the brass rods were cut with steel shears they would be rendered magnetic. Brass tubes prepared by drawing through steel dies were generally magnetic. He asked if the variation of the value of K for copper was due to impurities. Mr. R. S. Whipple asked if the author had performed any experiments on wood or ebonite, and, if so, with what results. Mr. Jolley, in reply, said he could fully endorse Mr. Campbell's remarks concerning the difficulty of obtaining non-magnetic brass, which seemed to be quite rare. In reply to Mr. Duddell's point concerning the cleaning of the specimens, a fair amount of care was taken to keep the specimens clean; they were handled with ivory forceps, and, in most cases, they were bright new samples of rod and wire, which to the eye certainly did not seem in any way oxidised; and if any such oxide or other salt were present, unless it were very highly magnetic, it would not be sufficient in quantity to account for the high values of K generally obtained. Mr. Owen raised a point in connection with the theory, which would be of importance if the maximum deflection were obtained with the specimen in the interpolar gap; but, as a matter of fact, the maximum deflection as indicated in the paper is always obtained when the specimen is considerably out of the gap of the magnet, and consequently the position of the specimen does not become so important. An excellent datum is, however, provided by the damping sector, which has to be accurately between the poles of its magnet for perfectly free rotation, and when this is so the tube is rightly centred relatively to the gap of the deflecting magnet. No experiments have been made either as to side pull, which, however, in feebly magnetic bodies must be very slight indeed, or as to temperature. With regard to the uniformity of magnetization of the specimen raised by Dr. Russell, he believed that some experiments on this had been made by MM. Curie and Cheneveau, but the point would have to be referred to M. Cheneveau before anything definite could be said. With regard to Mr. Crawley's point as to the cutting of the specimens and the presence of iron from the tools employed in manufacture, they had no special method of cutting the lengths and had to resort to the usual workshop processes. The experiments with acid treatment show that although in some part the magnetic quality is a surface effect, this is by no means accountable for all, and the amount of magnetic material left on the surface from tooling was far too small to account for the values of K found. With regard to copper, the value of K certainly was due to impurity, but it is considered that the magnetic balance gives indications of the presence of such impurity with far greater reliability than any chemical test for such minute quantities. In reply to Mr. Whipple, both wood and ebonite had been tested, but not tabulated. In both these cases the results were variable, and it was practically impossible to free the material from the effects of tooling; in any case the results always showed the specimens to be very magnetic.

BOOKS RECEIVED

MISCELLANEOUS

- Canada the Land of Hope.* By E. Way Elkington, F.R.G.S. Illustrated. A. and C. Black. 3s. 6d.
British Floral Decoration. By R. Forester Felton, F.R.H.S. Illustrated. A. and C. Black. 7s. 6d. net.
Alpine Flowers and Gardens. Painted and Described by G. Flemwell. A. and C. Black. 7s. 6d. net.
Recent Electoral Statistics. By J. Rooke Corbett, M.A. The Proportional Representation Society. 3d.
The Record Interpreter: A Collection of Abbreviations, Latin Words and Names used in English Historical Manuscripts and Records. Compiled by Charles Trice Martin, B.A., F.S.A. Second Edition. Stevens and Sons. 15s.
Sword-of-the-Crowns. Rendered into English by the Countess of Cromartie. With an Introduction by Henry Baerlein. Elkin Mathews. 3s. 6d. net.
Thomas Muskerri, a Play in Three Acts. By Padraic Colum. Maunsell and Co., Dublin. 1s. net.
A Manual of First Aid for Archidiaconal and other Inspections. By W. D. Caroe, M.A., F.S.A. Incorporated Church Building Society. 6d. net.
Bedford Town and Bedford Schools. G. C. Walker, 1, St. Paul's Square, Bedford. Gratis.

THEOLOGY

- King George V. Prayer-Books.* (Containing the Royal Warrant.) Henry Frowde, Oxford University Press.
King George V. Prayer-Book and Hymnal Companion. Eyre and Spottiswoode.
A Sermon Preached in the Chapel of Jesus College, Cambridge, May 8, 1910, on the Occasion of the Death of His Majesty King Edward VII. By Henry Montagu Butler, D.D. Bowes and Bowes, Cambridge. 2d.

HISTORY, BIOGRAPHY AND MEMOIRS

- A History of Protestant Missions in the Near East.* By Julius Richter, D.D. Oliphant, Anderson and Ferrier. 10s. 6d.
La Vie Politique dans les Deux Mondes. Bibliothèque d'Histoire Contemporaine. Troisième Année, 1er Octobre, 1908—30 Septembre, 1909. Publié sous la Direction d'Achille Viallate. Félix Alcan, Paris. 10 frs.
Aus dem alten Indien. Drei Aufsätze über den Buddhismus, altindische Dichtung und Geschichtsschreibung. By Hermann Oldenberg. Gebrüder Paetel, Berlin. 2 marks.
Sarah Curran's and Robert Emmet's Letters. By Harry Sirr. Hodges, Figgis and Co., Dublin. 1s.

EDUCATIONAL

- Hungarian Self-Taught (Thimm's System), with Phonetic Pronunciation.* By the Count de Scissons. E. Marlborough and Co. 2s.
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Travellers' Esperanto Manual of Conversation: English-Esperanto. By J. C. O'Connor, M.A., Ph.D. E. Marlborough and Co. 6d.

FICTION

- The A B C Girl.* By L. T. Meade. F. V. White and Co. 6s.
A Haunted Inheritance: A Story of Modern Mysticism. F. V. White and Co. 6s.
Richard Beverley, a Love Story. By Francis Bancroft. Digby, Long and Co. 6s.
Simon the Jester. By William J. Locke. John Lane. 6s.

VERSE

- Atlantis, the Newdigate Prize Poem 1910.* By Charles Henry Bewley. B. H. Blackwell, Oxford. 1s. net.

PERIODICALS

- The Atlantic Monthly; Transactions of the Baptist Historical Society; The Bibelot; The New Quarterly; Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Revue Bleue; Constitution Papers; A Monthly Review of National and Municipal Politics; Alma Mater; Aberdeen University Magazine; The Book Buyer, New York; The Bodleian; The Conservator, Philadelphia; Book-Prices Current; Mercure de France; Scotia; Cambridge University Reporter; University Correspondent and Educational Review.*

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